



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

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FLASH MOB AND DRUM CIRCLES HIGHLIGHT OF MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

“Drumming Out Stigma” Event Takes Place May 14 at Balboa Park

WHAT: A flash mob of hundreds of people will take place at Balboa Park during the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency’s (HHSA) “Drumming Out Stigma” event, celebrating May as Mental Health Month.

At the event, participants will play in drumming circles—using drums, water jugs, pails, and other types of percussion instruments—and share their stories of recovery from mental illness and talk about the stigma that had an impact on their lives and kept them from getting treatment.

WHO: **Jennifer Schaffer**, Ph.D., Director, HHSA’s Behavioral Health Services
Alfredo Aguirre, LCSW, Director, HHSA’s Mental Health Services
Jon Nachison, Ph.D., Chief of Psychology, Bayview and Paradise Valley Hospital
Jamin Peck, Recovery Innovations of California
Holly McGinley and other mental health consumers, family members, and friends

WHEN: **SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2011**
1:00 p.m.—Opening Remarks and Stories of Recovery
1:45 p.m.—Flash Mob
1:55 p.m.—Drumming Circles

WHERE: **BALBOA PARK, Presidents Way and Park Boulevard**

WHY: Research has demonstrated that drumming is a valuable treatment for stress, fatigue, anxiety, hypertension, mental illness, and several other mental and physical disabilities.

One in four adults experience a mental health disorder during any given year, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. The fear of rejection and discrimination is one of the main barriers that prevent people with a mental illness from getting treatment.

About 61,000 people benefit from County-funded mental health services each year. It is estimated that as many as 80 percent of people suffering from a mental disorder can lead productive lives if they receive appropriate treatment.

People suffering from a mental illness can access services by calling the County’s 24-hour, multi-lingual Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

EDITORS NOTE: We want to surprise the audience and pedestrians with the flash mob dance and ask that you not publicize that part of the event. Thank you for your understanding.

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